

DE VIS' TYPES OF AUSTRALIAN SNAKES.

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C. W. De Vis was Curator of the Queensland Museum from 1882 to 1910. During this period he described a wide range of vertebrate material, both fossil and recent, and many of his new forms have provided difficulties for other workers.

He described 22 forms of Australian snakes, and the types or probable types of all but one are in the collections of this Museum. Over the years, some of his names have been consigned to synonymy, while others have remained doubtful. The type material has now been examined and re-determined by us. Only three of the 22 forms named by De Vis are considered valid. They are *Pseudechis guttatus*, *Rhynchoelaps warro* and *Tropidechis dunensis*.

A complete list follows showing the present status of the various forms. Necessary corrections to the original descriptions are given with De Vis' statement in each instance in parenthesis.

As little has been recorded of the distribution of snakes in Queensland, information on the range of most species, based on material collected within the State, is included.

NEOSPADES KENTII De Vis. = **MYRON RICHARDSONII** Gray.

Myron richardsonii Gray, Cat. Snakes Coll. Brit. Mus., 1849, p. 70.

Neospades kentii De Vis, Proc. Roy. Soc. Qd, 6, 1889, p. 238 (Cambridge Gulf, North-western Australia).

Corrections to original description of *Neospades kentii* De Vis. Type, No. J. 681 Queensland Museum.

The nostrils are dorsal; temporals 1+2 left and 2+2 right (3); sixth upper labial largest on left, eighth largest on right (sixth); ventrals 136 (138); subcaudal 34 paired, 7 partially divided. The number of subcaudals was omitted by De Vis.

Although described as a new genus and species, *Neospades kentii* De Vis is clearly a synonym of *Myron richardsonii* Gray. This was noted by Boulenger (1896, p. 20).

The species is not represented from Queensland localities in the collections.

DISTIRA NASALIS De Vis = **HYDROPHIS MAJOR** (Shaw).

Hydrus major Shaw, Gen. Zool., 3, 1802, p. 558, pl. 124.

Distira nasalis De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 6, 1905, p. 48 (Queensland Coast).

Corrections to original description of *Distira nasalis* De Vis. Type, No. J. 203 Queensland Museum.

De Vis described the infero-posterior angle of the nasal as divided from the remainder of the nasal by grooves from the nostril to the prefrontal and second labial. This is the condition on the right side, but there is no groove to the prefrontal on the left side. Anterior temporals 2 (1); upper labials 7 (6); body scales in 39 rows (37).

The type of *Distira nasalis* De Vis is a specimen of *Hydrophis major* (Shaw). Longman (1918, p. 42) noted this, and remarked upon most of the above corrections to the original description.

De Vis' type is the only Queensland specimen in the collections.

DENISONIA FENESTRATA De Vis = **GLYPHODON TRISTIS** Günther.

Glyphodon tristis Günth., Cat. Colubr. Snakes Brit. Mus., 1858, p. 211.

Denisonia fenestrata De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 6, 1905, p. 50 (Queensland).

De Vis made use of two specimens in his description of *D. fenestrata*, but there is only one labelled as the type (J. 200) in the collections. It is recorded as from Cape York, North Queensland.

This specimen, which is in good condition, has the characteristically small eye of *Glyphodon* with diameter less than its distance from the mouth; rostral broader than deep, just visible from above; internasals slightly less than half as long as prefrontals; nasal divided, widely separated from the single preocular; frontal one-fifth longer than broad, as long as its distance from the tip of the snout, shorter than the parietals, two and a half times broader than the supraoculars; postoculars 2; temporals 2 + 2, lower anterior wedged between fifth and sixth upper labials; 6 upper labials, third and fourth entering the orbit; chin shields equal, anterior in touch with 4 lower labials. Body scales in 17 rows; ventrals, 169; subcaudals, 28 pairs; anal divided.

Denisonia fenestrata De Vis is a synonym of *Glyphodon tristis* Günther. This was noted by Longman (1912, p. 23).

It would appear that this species is confined to Cape York Peninsula in Australia. The only other Australian specimen in the collections is from Cape York. There are three from New Guinea, but the precise localities are not known.

DENISONIA BANCROFTI De Vis = **ASPIDOMORPHUS DIADEMA** (Schlegel).

Calamaria diadema Schleg., Phys. Serp., 2, 1837, p. 32.

Denisonia bancrofti De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 10, 1911, p. 23 (Stannary Hills, Atherton Tableland, North-east Queensland).

Corrections to original description of *Denisonia bancrofti* De Vis. Type, No. J. 195 Queensland Museum.

Frontal twice as broad as the supraoculars (3 times), and as long as its distance from the snout (shorter); ventrals 196 (185); subcaudals 35 pairs (33 pairs); anal divided (entire).

A constant feature of *A. diadema* is the presence of a band of red on the nape. This varies slightly in size and position. In preserved specimens the red colour is lost and the band appears lighter than the remainder of the dorsal surface. In the type of *D. bancrofti* it extends over the posterior part of the parietals and four rows of nuchal scales.

The specimen upon which De Vis based his *Denisonia bancrofti* is clearly an example of *Aspidomorphus diadema* (Schlegel).

Specimens of *Aspidomorphus diadema* have been collected in Queensland from Wenlock, Cape York Peninsula in the north, to the southern border of the State and west to Longreach. It is seldom that specimens exceed 300mm. in length, but a few examples measuring up to 500mm. have been obtained.

BRACHYSOMA SUTHERLANDI De Vis = **DEMANSIA NUCHALIS** (Günther).

Pseudonaja nuchalis Günth., Cat. Colubr. Snakes Brit. Mus., 1858, p. 227.

Brachysoma sutherlandi De Vis. Proc. Roy. Soc. Qd, 1, 1884, p. 139 (Carl Creek, Norman River, North Queensland).

Corrections to original description of *Brachysoma sutherlandi* De Vis. Type, No. J. 190 Queensland Museum.

Ventrals 162 (160); subcaudals 45 (40).

Longman (1912, p. 24) noted that *B. sutherlandi* probably was based on a juvenile specimen of the genus *Demansia*, and Fry (1914, p. 192) doubtfully included the name in the synonymy of *Demansia modesta* (Günther). It is clear, however, that *B. sutherlandi* is a synonym of *Demansia nuchalis* (Günther).

The series of *D. nuchalis* in the collections shows that the species is commonly present throughout Queensland west of the Main Divide and south of Cape York Peninsula. In the eastern coastal areas, there are records from Eidsvold, Lowood and Stradbroke Island, south-east Queensland.

PSEUDELAPS BANCROFTI De Vis = **DEMANSIA NUCHALIS** (Günther).

Pseudonaja nuchalis Günth., Cat. Colubr. Snakes Brit. Mus., 1858, p. 227.

Pseudolaps bancrofti De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 10, 1911, p. 25 (Stannary Hills, Atherton Tableland, North-east Queensland).

Corrections to original description of *Pseudelaps bancrofti* De Vis. Type, No. J. 187 Queensland Museum.

Ventrals 195 (188); subcaudals 61 pairs (59).

Longman (1912, p. 24) noted the affinities of *P. bancrofti* and *D. nuchalis*, and Fry (1914, p. 195) included De Vis' name in the synonymy of *D. nuchalis*.

HOPLOCEPHALUS VESTIGIATUS De Vis = **DEMANSIA OLIVACEA** (Gray).

Lycodon olivaceus Gray, Zool. Miscell., 1842, p. 54.

Hoplocephalus vestigiatus De Vis, Proc. Roy. Soc. Qd, 1, 1884, p. 138 (unknown locality).

Corrections to original description of *Hoplocephalus vestigiatus* De Vis. Type, No. J. 206 Queensland Museum.

Ventrals 182 (152); second upper labial barely reaches anterior ocular (third upper labial).

Boulenger (1896, p. 335) doubtfully included *Hoplocephalus vestigiatus* in the synonymy of *Denisonia superba*, a species which does not occur in Queensland. De Vis' type agrees in all respect with *Demansia olivacea* (Gray).

In Queensland, *D. olivacea* occurs in the northern and eastern coastal areas. Julia Creek, near Cloncurry, is the farthest inland record in the north, and Noosa Heads, about 100 miles north of Brisbane, is the most southerly record in the east.

PSEUDECHIS MORTONENSIS De Vis = **PSEUDECHIS GUTTATUS** De Vis.

Pseudechis guttata De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 6, 1905, p. 49 (Cecil Plains, South Queensland).

Pseudechis mortonensis De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 10, 1911, p. 24 (Brisbane, South-east Queensland).

Corrections to original description of *Pseudechis guttatus* De Vis. Type, No. J. 189 Queensland Museum.

Diameter of eye equal to distance from mouth (diameter of eye greater); portion of rostral visible from above equal to one-third its distance from frontal (less than one-third); width of frontal slightly greater than supraoculars (equal to width of supraoculars); right anterior chin shield in touch with three lower labials (four); ventrals 186 (181); subcaudals 40 single, 11 paired (39 single, 11 paired).

Corrections to original description of *Pseudechis mortonensis* De Vis, based on a specimen labelled doubtfully as the type (J. 207).

Rostral two-thirds broader than deep (one-fourth); subcaudals 32 single, 28 paired (22 single, 38 paired); length of tail 200mm. (20mm.).

The need for these alterations was noted by Longman (1912, p. 24). The differences in numbers of single and paired subcaudals, and the length of tail could be errors in printing.

The following variations have been noted in 20 adult specimens, 5 previously labelled *mortonensis* and 15 *guttatus*.

EYE.—Vertical diameter of eye varies from equal to its distance from the mouth to being contained one and a half times in the distance from the mouth.

ROSTRAL.—Portion of the rostral visible from above equal to one-third its distance from the frontal, except in one specimen in which it is two-fifths this distance.

FRONTAL.—Frontal is one-eighth wider than the supraoculars in all with one exception in which the frontal is one-eighth less than the width of the supraoculars.

NASALS.—The nasals may be divided or semidivided ; in some specimens they are divided on one side and semidivided on the other.

CHIN SHIELDS.—Anterior and posterior shields equal in length, or the posterior slightly longer than the anterior. Three lower labials in contact with anterior chin shields, except in one specimen in which four labials are in contact with the left anterior shields.

TEMPORALS.—Temporals $2 + 2$; in one specimen $2 + 0$.

SCALE COUNTS.—Rows of scales in all specimens number 19 ; ventrals 186-196; subcaudals 49-61, the majority of them single, but one has an equal number of single and paired subcaudals, and two have the majority paired ; the anal in all specimens is divided.

COLOUR.—*P. mortonensis* was described as black with bluish lead-grey ventrals. In all specimens examined, however, including the doubtful type, there are some lighter, cream-grey dorsal patches, and the ventrals are flecked with cream and darker grey. In specimens originally determined as *P. guttatus*, the lighter dorsal patches are more numerous, giving an overall cream-grey appearance in some specimens. The ventrals are either uniformly grey or cream-grey. This applies to all with the exception of one specimen recently collected at Ballandean on the Main Divide, south Queensland. This example is olive-brown above, uniform on the head, but with each body scale lighter in the centre. The ventrals are cream-grey, mottled with dark grey on the margins.

On the whole, specimens from coastal localities are darker and more uniform in colour than those from west of the Main Divide, but there are no grounds for maintaining *P. mortonensis* and *P. guttatus* as separate species.

Specimens of *P. guttatus* as here defined have been obtained in Queensland only from the south-eastern area, west to Glenmorgan and north to Bundaberg.

PSEUDECHIS WILESMITHII De Vis = **OXYURANUS SCUTELLATUS** (Peters).

Pseudechis scutellatus Peters, Mber. preuss. Akad. Wiss., 1867, p. 710.

Pseudechis wilesmithii De Vis, Ann Qd Mus., 10, 1911, p. 24 (Walsh River, Cape York Pen., North Queensland).

Corrections to original description of *Pseudechis wilesmithii* De Vis. Type, No. J. 201 Queensland Museum.

Rostral one-third broader than deep (one-fourth longer than broad); frontal one and a half times as long as broad (more than one and a half times as long as broad); 2 preoculars on left, 1 on right (2 preoculars); 6 upper labials (7), but the lower anterior temporal reaches the margin and appears as an extra labial on the left; 3 lower labials are in touch with the anterior chin shields (2); subcaudals 71 pairs (63 pairs). The tail is incomplete.

Longman (1913, p. 24) noted the need for most of these corrections and recorded De Vis' type as being closely allied to *Pseudechis scutellatus* Peters. The type of *Pseudechis wilesmithii* De Vis is clearly a specimen of *Oxyuranus scutellatus* (Peters).

Although the specimen which Peters described in 1867 as *Pseudechis scutellatus* was collected at Rockhampton, mid-eastern Queensland, the species does not appear to have been subsequently recognised in Australia until a specimen exceeding nine feet in length was collected by W. McLennan near Coen, Cape York Peninsula in 1922. This was described by Kinghorn (1923, p. 42) as a new genus and species, *Oxyuranus macleannani*. Thomson (1933, p. 855), who had obtained additional material from Cape York Peninsula, showed that Kinghorn's new form had been described from an example of *Pseudechis scutellatus* Peters. However, the generic characters described by Kinghorn, especially some features of the skull, are worthy of recognition and *Oxyuranus* has been retained.

During the last twenty years, under the vernacular name of Taipan, the species has received much unwarranted public attention in Queensland. It is one of the largest of venomous snakes, and therefore potentially dangerous from the human point of view, but it is neither so numerous nor so widespread as one or two more dangerous forms; for example, the Brown Snake, *Demansia textilis*. Specimens of *D. textilis* are usually highly nervous and strike without provocation, whereas McLennan rode his horse over the large example of *O. scutellatus* which he collected near Coen.

It is not generally known that the range of *O. scutellatus* in eastern Queensland extends considerably to the south of Cape York Peninsula. In the collections of this Museum there is a specimen from Colosseum, about 230 miles north of Brisbane, which was received in 1922. There are other specimens from near Rockhampton, Townsville and Watalgan, mid-east Queensland, and during the last two years a number has been received from the vicinity of Gympie, about 90 miles north of Brisbane.

There is no doubt that the species has always been present at least as far south as Gympie, but specimens have not previously been submitted for determination.

DENISONIA NIGRA De Vis = **DENISONIA CORONOIDES** (Günther).

Hoplocephalus coronoides Günth., Cat. Colubr. Snakes Brit. Mus., 1858, p. 215.

Denisonia nigra De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 6, 1905, p. 50 (Tasmania).

Corrections to original description of *Denisonia nigra* De Vis. Type, No. J. 196 Queensland Museum.

Frontal twice as long as broad (one and two-thirds as broad as long); ventrals 141 (126).

The specimen from which *Denisonia nigra* De Vis was described is a dark coloured example of *Denisonia coronoides* (Günth). This species does not occur as far north as Queensland; De Vis' type is from Tasmania.

DENISONIA FRONTALIS var. PROPINQUA De Vis = **DENISONIA SUTA** (Peters).

Hoplocephalus sutus Peters. Mber. preuss. Akad. Wiss., 1863, p. 234.

Denisonia frontalis var. *propinqua* De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 6, 1905, p. 51 (Queensland).

Corrections to original descriptions of *Denisonia frontalis* var. *propinqua* De Vis. Type, No. J. 198 Queensland Museum.

Frontal almost twice as long as broad (one-third longer than broad); ventrals 172 (161).

Both *Denisonia frontalis* Ogilby and *D. frontalis* var. *propinqua* De Vis are based on specimens of *Denisonia suta* (Peters). This was noted by Kinghorn (1920, p. 110).

From the material in the collections it would appear that *D. suta* occurs in Queensland on and west of the Main Divide south of Cape York Peninsula.

HOPLOCEPHALUS ORNATUS De Vis = **DENISONIA MACULATA** (Steindachner).

Hoplocephalus maculatus Steind., Novara Rept., 1867, p. 81.

Hoplocephalus ornatus De Vis, Proc. Roy. Soc. Qd, 1, 1884, p. 100, pl. 15 (Surat, inland South Queensland).

Correction to original description of *Hoplocephalus ornatus* De Vis. Type, No. J. 199 Queensland Museum.

Third and fourth upper labials enter the orbit (fourth and fifth).

There is a marked difference in colour between specimens of *D. maculata* from west of the Main Divide in eastern Australia and those from coastal areas. The former are banded, the latter are not banded.

Steindachner's material came from New South Wales, presumably the coastal area, for his description is that of a non-banded specimen. The type of *H. ornatus* De Vis, however, is from Surat, inland Queensland, and it is banded.

Boulenger (1896, p. 341) noted the structural similarity, but hesitated to include *H. ornatus* in the synonymy of *D. maculata* because of the marked colour difference. Later, Waite and Longman (1920, p. 178) described what they termed a new variety, *Denisonia maculata* var. *devisi*, from six specimens, including De Vis' type and five others, three from localities west of the Main Divide, and two lacking any particulars. This is De Vis' *Hoplocephalus ornatus*.

Although these inland and coastal forms would appear to represent good subspecies, it is yet too early to attempt subspecific differentiation of Australian snakes. When a name is required for the banded form, *devisi* Waite and Longman will have to be used; *Denisonia ornata* (De Vis) is preoccupied by *Denisonia ornata* Krefft described from a coastal non-banded specimen.

The banded form of *D. maculata* is represented in the collections by specimens from localities throughout Queensland west of the Main Divide and south of Cape York Peninsula and the northern coastal areas. Non-banded specimens have been obtained from the eastern coastal area from the vicinity of Rockhampton south to the Dawson Valley.

Denisonia fasciata Rosen (1905, p. 179), described from two specimens collected in south-western Australia, would appear to be conspecific with the banded form of *Denisonia maculata* (Steind.).

HOPLOCEPHALUS SULCANS De Vis = **HOPLOCEPHALUS BITORQUATUS** (Jan).

Alecto bitorquata Jan, Rev. Mag. Zool., 2nd ser., 11, 1859, p. 128.

Hoplocephalus sulcans De Vis, Proc. Roy. Soc. Qd, 1, 1884, p. 138 (Mitchell, inland South Queensland).

The specimen from which *Hoplocephalus sulcans* De Vis was described is missing from the collections, but the original description is unmistakably that of a specimen of *Hoplocephalus bitorquatus* (Jan). This was recognised by Boulenger (1896, p. 349).

H. bitorquatus has the head broad, distinct from the neck, and the ventrals are keeled. Scale counts vary from 19 to 21 rows. A distinctive characteristic of the species is the colour pattern of the head. This is constant, and De Vis was at pains to describe it under three different names.

Queensland examples of *H. bitorquatus* in the collections are from numerous localities in the south-eastern quarter of the State, extending from the vicinity of Clermont and Rockhampton to the southern border and west to Surat.

DENISONIA ANGULATA De Vis = **HOPLOCEPHALUS BITORQUATUS** (Jan).

Alecto bitorquata Jan, Rev. Mag. Zool., 2nd ser., 11, 1859, p. 128.

Denisonia angulata De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 6, 1905, p. 51 (Queensland).

Corrections to original description of *Denisonia angulata* De Vis. Type, No. J. 194 Queensland Museum.

Scales in 19 rows (17); ventrals 198 (186); subcaudals 47 (46).

The broad head with distinctive colour pattern, keeled ventrals, and scale counts characteristic of *Hoplocephalus bitorquatus* are evident in the type of *Denisonia angulata*.

DENISONIA REVELATA De Vis = **HOPLOCEPHALUS BITORQUATUS** (Jan).

Alecto bitorquata Jan, Rev. Mag. Zool., 2nd ser., 11 1859, p. 128.

Denisonia revelata De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 10, 1911, p. 22 (Stannary Hills, Atherton Tableland, North-east Queensland).

Corrections to original description of *Denisonia revelata* De Vis. Type, No. J. 2957 Queensland Museum.

Temporals 2+2 (1+2); subcaudals 48 (50); scales in 19 rows.

The type of *Denisonia revelata* in the third characteristic example of *Hoplocephalus bitorquatus* described by De Vis as a new species.

FURINA ROBUSTA De Vis = **RHYNCHOELAPS BERTHOLDI** (Jan).

Elaps bertholdi Jan, Rev. Mag. Zool., 2nd ser., 11, 1859, p. 123.

Furina robusta De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 6, 1905, p. 51 (Coolgardie, inland Western Australia).

Corrections to original description of *Furina robusta* De Vis. Type, No. J. 205 Queensland Museum.

Frontal longer than its distance from the snout (shorter); ventrals 132 (135).

The type of *Furina robusta* De Vis from Coolgardie, inland Western Australia, is a typical example of *Rhynchoelaps bertholdi* (Jan). The colour pattern characteristic of *bertholdi* is still evident in the type.

DENISONIA ROSTRALIS De Vis = **RHYNCHOELAPS WARRO** (De Vis).

Figures 1 and 2.

Cacophis warro De Vis, Proc. Roy. Soc. Qd. 1, 1884, p. 139 (Warro Station, Port Curtis, Mid-east Queensland).

Denisonia rostralis De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 10, 1911, p. 23 (Stannary Hills, Atherton Tableland, North-east Queensland).

Rhynchoelaps fuscicollis Lonnberg and Andersson, Kungl. K. svenska Vetensk. Akad. Handl., 52, 7, 1915, p. 9 (Cairns, North-east Queensland).

Corrections to original description of *Cacophis warro* De Vis. Type, No. J. 188 Queensland Museum.

Prefrontal in contact with second and third upper labials (with third and fourth upper labials); third upper labial and preocular form anterior edge of orbit (fourth upper labial and preocular).

Corrections to original description of *Denisonia rostralis* De Vis. Type, No. J. 193 Queensland Museum.

Eye distant from mouth one and a third times its diameter (once its diameter); frontal one and a half times as long as broad (nearly twice as long as broad); ventrals 141 (140); anal divided (entire).

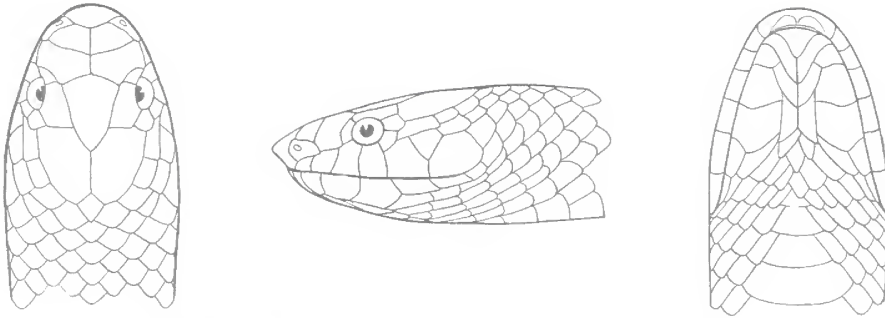


Figure 1.—*Rhynchoelaps warro* (De Vis). Head of type, X3.

Although *warro* and *rostralis* would appear so far to have been ignored in the literature, it is clear that they are based on two specimens of the same species. In addition, the amended descriptions of both essentially agree with the description of *Rhynchoelaps fuscicollis* Lonnberg and Andersson. De Vis' name, *Cacophis warro*, has precedence and becomes the name for the species.

The following variations occur in the series comprising the two types, a third specimen in the Queensland Museum collections, and *R. fuscicollis* as described by Lonnberg and Andersson.

EYE.—Diameter of eye from two-thirds to three-fourths its distance from the mouth.

ROSTRAL.—Portion visible from above from one-half to four-fifths its distance from the frontal.

FRONTAL.—From one and one-third to one and two-thirds as long as broad ; equal to or slightly longer than its distance from anterior of head.

CHIN SHIELDS.—May be in contact ; separated by a pair of lanceolate scales ; or separated by azygous shields.

SCALE COUNT.—Rows of scales in every case number 15 ; ventrals 141-154 ; subcaudals 15-22 pairs ; in all the anal is divided.

COLOUR.—The type of *warro* is completely bleached, but the colour pattern of the type of *rostralis* is still evident. In this specimen each dorsal scale is dark on the posterior margin, forming a reticulate pattern ; the head shields are irregularly mottled with dark brown ; there is a dark brown patch behind the head commencing on the fifth and extending to the fifteenth nuchal scale, about eleven scales wide anteriorly and contracting to one posteriorly ; the ventrals are uniformly light coloured.

The colour pattern of the third specimen in the collections is closely similar to the above, but the dark brown patch behind the head extends only from the fifth to the twelfth nuchal scale.

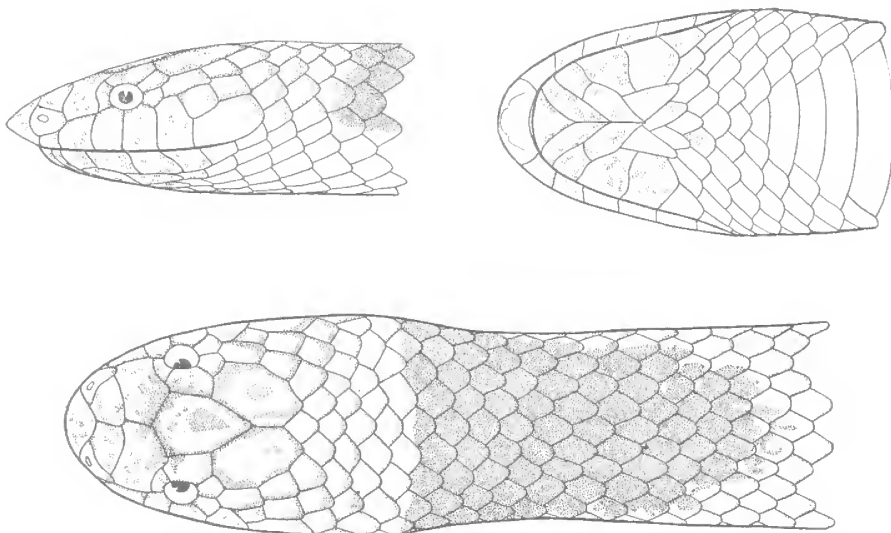


Figure 2.—*Rhynchoelaps warro* (De Vis). Type of *Denisonia rostralis* showing extent of dark brown area behind the head, X3.

From the description of *R. fuscicollis* by Lonnberg and Andersson it would appear that their single specimen also is similar, except that the dark patch behind the head is reduced. They state—"A broad blackish brown blotch occupies about six transverse rows of scales on the upper neck, beginning on the transverse row behind the parietals."

The type of *R. warro* is from Port Curtis near Rockhampton, mid-east Queensland; the type of *rostralis* and the other specimen in the collections are from the Atherton Tableland, north-east Queensland; and the type of *R. fuscicollis* was obtained at Cairns, north-east Queensland. These localities represent the known distribution of *R. warro*.

RHYNCHOELAPS LATIZONATUS De Vis = **VERMICELLA ANNULATA** (Gray).

Calamaria annulata Gray, Grey's Journals of Two expeditions of Discovery in North-west and Western Australia, 2, 1841, p. 443.

Rhynchoelaps latizonatus De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 6, 1905, p. 49 (Queensland).

Corrections to original description of *Rhynchoelaps latizonatus* De Vis. Type, No. J. 192 Queensland Museum.

Portion of rostral visible from above equal to half its distance from frontal (equal to distance from frontal); frontal one and a half times as long as broad (one and one-fifth times); ventrals 228 (225); subcaudals 20 pairs (19 pairs).

Longman (1916, p. 48) referred *Rhynchoelaps latizonatus* De Vis to the synonymy of *Furina annulata* (Gray). Although the type is somewhat bleached, the colour pattern characteristic of *V. annulata* is still evident.

The range of the species in Queensland, according to the material in the collections, is from the vicinity of Charters Towers in the north to the southern border, and west to Jericho.

TROPIDECHIS DUNENSIS De Vis.

Figure 3.

Tropidechis dunensis De Vis, Ann. Qd Mus., 10, 1911, p. 21 (Darro, Darling Downs, South Queensland).

Corrections to original description of *Tropidechis dunensis* De Vis. Type, No. J. 191 Queensland Museum.

Diameter of eye slightly greater than twice its distance from the mouth (twice); frontal one-third longer than broad (one-fifth), three-fourths as long as parietals (as long as parietals), and three times the width of the supraoculars (more than twice); nasal semidivided by suture on lower margin; temporals 3 and 4 (single); scales in 23 rows (21); ventrals 216; subcaudals 54 pairs (52); anal entire.

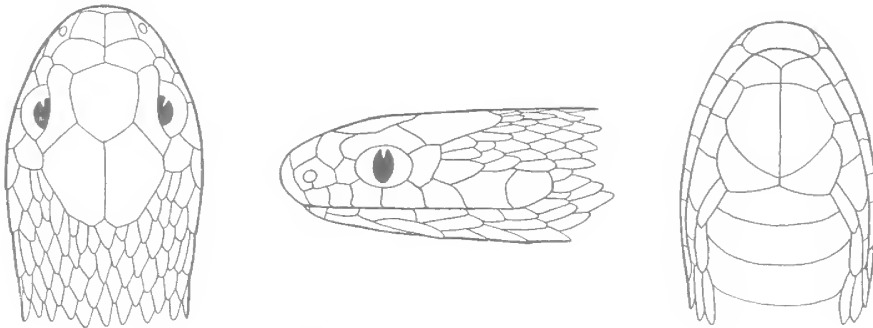


Figure 3.—*Tropidechis dunensis* De Vis. Head of type, X3.

When a species is described from a single specimen, and 40 years later the type is still the only example in the collections, there is reason to doubt its status. This is the position with regard to *Tropidechis dunensis* De Vis. The type has been examined, and it is distinct from any known Australian snake. It is nearest in some respects to the only other species of the genus *Tropidechis carinatus* Krefft.

Waite and Longman (1920, p. 179) redescribed the type, correcting errors in the original description, but they gave the frontal as one-third broader than the supraoculars, instead of three times broader, and the nasal as entire, when it is semidivided by a suture on the lower margin.

De Vis recorded Darro, Darling Downs, Queensland as the locality of his specimen, but all efforts made to trace Darro have been unsuccessful. It would appear that this name has not at any time been in use in Queensland. Warra, near Dalby, or Darrs Creek, a tributary of the Condamine River, both in the Darling Downs district have been suggested. Darra is the name of an outer suburb of Brisbane, almost 100 miles east of the Darling Downs.

The receipt of only one specimen from such a well-known area, and the doubt about the locality as given by De Vis, suggests the possibility that the type of *Tropidechis dunensis* De Vis might not be an Australian collected specimen. This possibility has yet to be investigated.

LITERATURE CITED.

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